

It's a good thing she's not a librarian and is only working here for a few days, because this room is crying out for a fire the way a canvas cries out for paint. Willow has worked hard on her self-control and she considers herself to be somewhat of a master at it, but this room full of old papers, old, dry, flammable papers, is a bit much. Just one spark just one. It would all go up so easily, it would all be so beautiful...

She locks her hands together. The librarian adjusts her glasses. She knows Willow's reputation and obviously loves this library. The act of faith is tremendous. Willow wants to be worthy.

"You remember what to do?" Wickerbottom says.

"Alphabetize!"

"Correct. Do you have any questions?" She gives Willow a serious look, giving her a last chance to admit she can't control herself and bail, probably.

"No questions, ma'am!" She snaps a three-fingered Girl Scout salute.

Wickerbottom nods with one sharp jerk. She will trust Willow. Willow will be trustworthy. "I'll check on you shortly. I'll be at the reference desk."

"Yes, ma'am!" And Willow is alone.

Alphabetize. Sounds easy, but the piles contain photographs, newspaper clippings... things in jars... Willow is not sure how to name all of these, or whether they should even be here. She sets them aside for now, she will ask Wickerbottom about them

later. The work is boring. She wants something interesting. She's glad she left her lighter with Wickerbottom so there's no temptation.

She reaches for the next piece of paper.

Her throat closes as soon as she touches it, before she's even seen what's printed on it. Her hands tremble and her back prickles. It's just a boring article about some students from a nearby college. They're all lined up, a bunch of men looking deadly earnest in formal getup. One student, standing in the front row, his eyes are crossed out with a black marker, there's a set of tally marks over his head. His small frown and the mess of hair that won't fit under his hat-

Wickerbottom is here to check on her. Willow's voice quivers, which it almost never does. "Who is this man?"

Wickerbottom peers through her glasses. Her mouth makes a firm line. "Willow," she says, "I think it would be best if you burned this picture."